

**2020 Annual Report**

In 2020, MAHDC fulfilled its mission to provide training, program support and advocacy for Maryland’s Historic District Commissions through its professional training workshops, online publications, and program support and advocacy. Having celebrated its fortieh anniversary in 2019, suddenly at the start of its forty-first year, the Maryland Association of Historic District Commissions (MAHDC) experienced the loss of its stalwart co-founder, G. Bernard “Bernie” Callan, Jr. Bernie died in his sleep at his Frederick home on February 13, 2020. A tribute to Bernie is included at the end of this report and an appreciation appeared in the Winter/Spring 2020 issue of *Maryland’s Historic Districts* - https://mahdc.org/marylands-historic-districts-winter-spring-2020/

**Training & Technical Support for Commissioners and Local Government Staff**

*Commission Training*

As we believe that Historic Preservation Commission members require regular education and training, in the 18-month period since the last Annual Meeting in May 2019, MAHDC partnered with five Historic District Commissions (Annapolis, Calvert County, Cambridge, Cumberland, and Gaithersburg) to offer its foundational courses to seven Commissions. MAHDC instructors led sessions on *Design Review*, *Law and Procedures*, *Ethics & Defensive Decision Making*, and *Connecting with the Community* throughout the state in joint programs for Rockville and Gaithersburg and Cambridge and Salisbury and individual sessions for Annapolis, Cumberland and Calvert County. All together, more than 50 commissioners and staff were trained. A new modules on Preservation Easements and Archaeology are in development and will be piloted and added to the regular training program offerings in 2021.

*MAHDC 2020 Annual Symposium:*

MAHDC planned to host its Fifth Annual Symposium last May at St. Mary’s College in Southern Maryland. Each year, the statewide program has provided an opportunity to bring our membership and preservation colleagues together to learn and discuss an important and timely issues affecting Historic District Commissions around the state. This year’s theme was “Archaeology and Historic District Commissions”. However, due to the the outbreak of Covid-19 and restrictions on meetings as a result of the pandemic, the program was postponed until spring 2021. As planning moves forward, it is taking into consideration the changing conditions and the impact on large events like the symposium. MAHDC will announce the date and venue of the Annual Symposium when details are set.

*Technical Assistance*

MAHDC continued to provide technical assistance as needed to its members. This yearseveral requests for assistance were received through the online Commissioner Help Desk to which the Board of Directors responded in a timely fashion.

*MAHDC Archives*

MAHDC received archival materials previously stored at the Callan home and warehouse from Bernie’s family and moved them to temporary storage in a commercial facility. With the assistance of board member, Franklin A. Robinson, Jr., archivist with the Smithsonian Institution, contact was made with the Curator of the Maryland & Historical Collections, Special Collections and University Archives, at the University of Maryland, College Park, who agreed to accept the donation of MAHDC archives when the Hornbake Library opens and ready to receive the materials. In this way, MAHDC records will be preserved, catalogued and made available to the public for future research into the work of Historic Preservation Commissions in Maryland and MAHDC’s role.

**Networking and Learning at Social Hours**

In the past we have held regional social hours throughout the state that served as informal events for commissioners and preservation partners to network and exchange ideas. Last winter, the Board of Directors was planning a special Social Hour at Riversdale Mansion in Hyattsville, Prince George’s County to celebrate the close of MAHDC’s 40th Anniversary Year. However, due to Bernie’s passing and the advent of the pandemic, the event was postponed. As soon as the restrictions on gatherings are eased, social hours will resume. We would like to plan for a series of social hours in the coming year and encourage all Historic District Commissions to contact us if they are interested in hosting an event. In the past, the social hours have featured interesting speakers and we would like to continue to hold them in geographically diverse places to reach as much of our membership as possible.

**Technical Articles and Announcements in *Maryland’s Historic Districts***

MAHDC’s quarterly publication, *Maryland’s Historic Districts,* has again featured technical articles and case studies in most issues and guided commissioners and staff toward commission-specific training opportunities offered by MAHDC and other preservation organizations, including the Maryland Historical Trust (MHT), the National Alliance for Preservation Commissions (NAPC), the National Trust of Historic Preservation (NTHP), and the Vernacular Architecture Foundation (VAF). On our Facebook page, we have shared news about MAHDC programs and Commission activities, including job openings, and information about state and national preservation programs and issues from our partners, including Preservation Maryland and our partners listed above. programs.

**Growth of the *Maryland Historic Restoration Contractor Directory***

As a service to our commission community and preservation partners in Maryland, we continued to grow our online directory of preservation craftspeople and consultants. The *Maryland Historic Restoration Contractor Directory* (<https://mahdc.org/contractor-directory/>) now includes architects, architectural historians, archaeologists, carpenters, engineers, masons, tax credit specialists, roofers, and wood floor specialists, who have experience working with historic buildings in Maryland. For the first time, we offered the option to include links to video clips highlighting projects and additional photos in contractor listings for both Business Associates or Contributing Associates as a feature of the MAHDC website. Currently there are over forty businesses in the directory. A growing number report that they are receiving inquiries about their services.

**Thank you to our 2020 Board and Welcome to new Directors!**

Frederick Stachura, President, Prince George’s County

Sheila Bashiri, Rockville

Charles (Chris) Kirtz, Gaithersburg\*

Aaron Marcavitch, At-large

Kathy McKenney, Allegany County\*

Franklin A. Robinson, Jr. At-large

Kathleen Seay, At-large, changed to Calvert County

Cathy Thompson, Charles County

Daniel Tana, Prince George’s County\*

Kirsti Uunila, Calvert County, changed to At-large

Chris Berger, Gaithersburg\*

*\*In addition to the loss of Bernie Callan, we acknowledge the retirement of two directors in 2020: Chris Kirtz, due to his move out-of-state, and Daniel Tana, due to personal obligations. We welcome Kathy McKenney, Cumberland, and Chris Berger, Gaithersburg, as new directors.*

**Our Staff**

Leslie L. Gottert, Executive Director

***A Tribute to G. Bernard “Bernie” Callan, Jr.***

The Maryland Association of Historic District Commissions suddenly lost its estimed co-founder, G. Bernard “Bernie” Callan, Jr., last February. The Callan family held a memorial service in March at St. John’s Catholic Church in Frederick attended by many of Bernie’s heart-broken friends and colleagues, who joined his chldren, their spouses, and grandchildren, nieces and nephews in whose lives he had played such an engaged and important role.

As a memorial tribute, MAHDC contributed to the placement of the keystone above the entrance to the Shifferstadt Museum in Bernie’s honor. For those who knew him well, that German farm house and the City of Frederick and its surrounding county represented the genesis of Bernie’s service to the preservation community. They were also the focal point of his expansive commitment to the field.

Bernie’s service to historic preservation included such accomplishments as the establishment of the Frederick Historic District Commission, the Frederick County Landmark Foundation, the National Association of Preservation Commissions and, of course, our organization, for which he was co-founder with Cherilyn Widell in 1979.

Bernie served on the MAHDC Board of Directors for most, if not all, of the past forty years. He was also a Trustee of the Maryland Historical Trust for many years as well as on many other local, statewide and national organizations. In addition to his property managerment firm, he was a consultant to the National Trust for Historic Preservation. The MAHDC archives that Bernie stored at his home and in the Callan & Son warehouse have been moved to temporary storage in a commercial facility, but they will be transferred to the Maryland State Archives at Hornbake Library when the facility is ready to receive them. These will be classified and made available for research on the the work of Maryland’s Historic District Commissions and MAHDC in the future. In these many ways, Bernie’s service to the preservation of Maryland’s built heritage continues and will continue. We miss him every day. The link to Bernie’s obituary is: https://www.staufferfuneralhome.com/obituary/George-CallanJr